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KIRTLAND LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCES MILLIMETER WAVE TECHNOLOGY

KIRTLAND AIR FORCE BASE, N.M. – Several Kirtland commanders voluntarily experienced a beam of millimeter wave energy here recently. The beam produced a temporary, non-damaging, intolerable heating sensation designed to turn away adversaries.

Called Active Denial, the technology is designed to provide warfighters with a non-lethal alternative to using deadly force.

The volunteers, who represented operational, support and health organizations, gave first-hand perspectives and feedback on the technology to the technical and medical developers.

While being subjected to the millimeter wave energy, the volunteers were encouraged to perform actions that included throwing balls and simulating the firing of a rifle. These actions were designed to see if people could be effective while feeling the temporary, overwhelming effects of the non-lethal directed energy.

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The technology was developed by researchers at the laboratory's Directed Energy Directorate here and the Human Effectiveness Directorate at Brooks City Base in San Antonio, Texas. Researchers from both directorates supervised this event.

This spring, Active Denial System 1, which was integrated into a hybrid electric Humvee, completed a Joint Military Utility Assessment at Eglin Air Force Base, in northwest Florida, where the system was evaluated in a harbor and maritime environment. Coast Guard volunteers participated as test subjects in open and closed cockpit boats at various ranges.

There were two land-based Joint Military Utility Assessments last year as well. Held at Creech Air Force Base near Las Vegas, Nev., and at Fort Benning, Ga., these assessments provided a realistic test of the hardware as well as tested the operational concepts being considered for the capability. They were made by the warfighters, helping develop tactics, techniques and procedures that must be developed prior to operational deployment of the system.

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